

to consider it. This and other moral questions raised by prostitution should have been treated with the seriousness that they deserve, and curtailment of other material would have ensured that this was done without enlarging the book.

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**Williamson, G. Scott, and Pearse, Innes H.** *Science, Synthesis and Sanity*. London, 1965. Collins. Pp. 352. Price 45s.

THIS BOOK IS the work of two doctors who inspired the Peckham Experiment which first took off as a pilot project in 1926–29. This later developed into the Pioneer Health Centre, a scheme which combined the recreational amenities of a family club with facilities for education in healthy living, regular medical overhaul and supervision with an integrated approach to positive health based on the study of the individual in relation to the ecological background of the family. When the centre closed in 1951 from want of funds, Dr. Williamson began the preparation of this book, but died before its completion, since undertaken by the co-author, his wife.

The Peckham Experiment was an immensely important pioneering venture, which has paved the way for far-reaching future developments involving not only the National Health Service but the whole matter of healthy living in the widest sense.

When the scope, purpose and validity of the National Health Service is being subjected to scrutiny and reassessment, the light shed by the Peckham Experiment is highly relevant and significant. Despite some successes, the NHS remains less a programme of promoting health than of palliating disease, though the existence of the large "submerged iceberg of disease" shows how far it is from doing even that. It was in fact the Peckham Experiment which was largely responsible for first drawing attention to the problem of unrecognized and untreated disease. Thus figures drawn from overhaul of the first and second 500 families examined, revealed that only about one person in ten was free from some disorder or other, although well

over half imagined themselves well. The experiment also demonstrated how much could be done to correct and prevent these common but little appreciated deviations from optimum health and fitness, by skilled medical supervision and the inculcation of better hygiene and living habits. When one regards the thousands of millions squandered on drink, tobacco, gambling, dissipation and frivolity, with misery, frustration and impaired well-being as the outcome, it is clear that the diversion of a few hundred millions from those channels into health conservation and promotion on the lines foreshadowed by the Peckham Experiment might represent an excellent bargain, from both the social and the individual point of view.

This book presents the basic philosophy which underlay the Peckham Experiment. Accepting fully the contribution science has made to an understanding of organic mechanisms, its authors question the adequacy of the quantitative approach to healthy living. Many qualitative factors, including feelings, relationships and activating motives remain poorly defined and outside the scope of the essentially quantitative methodology of science to-day. They claim that qualitative as well as quantitative aspects must be taken into account in relation to the wholeness that is health.

In synthesis alone lies the sanity which maximizes the well-being of the individual in integrating it with the interests of society. An hypothesis combining these conditions is presented which is open to verification by experiment. In this there is offered a definition of the dimensions of quality and of the conditions in which it becomes manifest, and the possible correlation of these dimensions with those of the Space Time Realm is explored.

The potentiality and promise of the Peckham Experiment sprang from the background of hypothesis presented in this book, which deserves consideration of all who are concerned to advance the ideals of positive health and creative, integrated living. One may note with satisfaction the promise of a further book which will review in additional detail from the qualitative angle the material which has been observed in terms of that hypothesis.

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